

SKATEBOARD SAFETY TIPS

California Law, Vehicle Code, Section 21212 requires all youth, seventeen years of age and younger, who ride bicycles, non-motorized scooters, skateboards, or in-line or roller skates to wear a helmet, to protect your head when riding. An estimated 90% of skateboard injuries are among those ages 15 and younger. Head and brain injuries are the most common skateboard-related injury with 75% occurring among ages 0-4 years of age, 50% among ages 5-9 years, and 15% among 10-19 years of age. By wearing a properly fitted skateboard helmet can reduce your risk of death or brain injury by 88%. Follow the safety tips below. It will not only keep you safe, but riding like a pro!

Helmets

- Protect your head. Always **wear a helmet**-*Its the law!*
- Helmets need to be worn by all skaters, at all ability levels, at all times to prevent head injuries
- The helmet must fit securely and be buckled or fastened
- Do not buy a helmet that moves on the head when the head moves
- The front of the helmet should come down to just a finger's width above the eyebrows



Ride like a pro!
*Wear a helmet, elbow & knee pads,
and wrist guards when you ride!*

Knee Pads

- All skaters, and especially beginners, should wear knee pads to prevent knee injuries and scrapes
- Pads need to be fastened securely around the leg
- Pads are usually sized small, medium and large according to body size

Elbow Pads

- Elbow pads are also highly recommended for beginners as well as all aggressive skaters
- Elbow pads are sized small, medium and large according to body size

Wrist Guards

- Hand protection is recommended to be worn at all times
- Some guards and gloves are manufactured with a hard plastic splint. These offer the maximum protection against injury.
- They are sized small, medium and large according to body size

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Riding Safely

- Always keep your board maintained (check with a local shop for maintenance)
- Always ride during daylight hours
- Wear bright-colored clothes that make you more visible
- Stay alert! Watch for potholes, dogs, water, rocks and people.
- Look both ways before crossing alleyways and driveways.
- Children younger than 5 years of age should not use skateboards. Their center of gravity is higher, their neuromuscular system is not well developed, their judgment is poor, and they are not sufficiently able to protect themselves from injury. More developmentally appropriate activities need to be encouraged.
- Children ages 6-10 must have close adult supervision
- Skateboards must never be ridden near traffic. Their use should be prohibited on streets and highways. Activities that bring skateboards and motor vehicles together ("catching a ride") are especially dangerous.
- It is safest to ride in a community skateboard park
- Obey city laws & observe areas where you cannot skate
- Do not skate in crowds of pedestrians or bicyclists
- Do not take chances as complicated tricks require careful practice and specially designed areas
- Do not use headphones while skating-pay attention to your surroundings.

Learning to Fall

- Learn the basic skills of skateboarding along with knowing how to stop safely
- Learning how to fall will help reduce your chances of being seriously injured.
- If you lose your balance, crouch down on the skateboard so you will not have as far to fall.
- If you fall:
 - Try to roll rather than have your body absorb the force with your arms.
 - Relax your body, rather than stiffening your body and arms.

If You Fall

- If you fall and are taken to the hospital, bring the helmet with you.
- Any impact can crush the protective foam of the helmet. Even if it doesn't look damaged, it will still be less able to absorb future impacts. Replace a helmet on a regular basis because of wear and tear to the protective foam.
- If a helmet is damaged, either during an actual crash or in some other way, it should be replaced immediately.



**Some material obtained from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC Document #93)*